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1 NOV 1983

Raúl Ricardo ALFONSIN **ARGENTINA**
(Phonetic: ahlfohnSEEN)

President-Elect

Addressed as:
Mr. Alfonsín

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On 30 October Radical Civic Union (UCR) leader Raúl Alfonsín, who had widely been considered to be running slightly behind Peronist Italo Luder, was elected President of Argentina. His victory was the first defeat for the Peronists in a presidential election. A bold political operator and a charismatic and fiery orator, Alfonsín led an aggressive campaign that involved extensive travel, numerous speeches, television advertisements, and a nationally televised rally. He is generally believed to have won his following by actively supporting human rights groups and attacking the military government on a broad range of issues. He will probably assume office in December.

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Alfonsín that his foreign policy goals are to reestablish Argentina's prominence in Latin America, to maintain its role as a moderate force in the Nonaligned Movement, and to avoid involvement in East-West disputes. Two days before the election he publicly condemned the US military intervention in Grenada, rejecting any interference by the superpowers in Latin American affairs.

Domestic Issues 3.5(c)

Among Alfonsín's greatest challenges will be renegotiating Argentina's enormous national debt and curbing its spiraling inflation rate. The Argentine press reports that he will discard the economic management system of the previous, military government and will take direct control of economic matters himself.

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Alfonsín is optimistic that an expansion of agricultural exports will pave the way to economic recovery. he will immediately deal with the issue of the *desaparecidos,* the approximately 7,000 people who disappeared in the late 1970s during a military anti-insurgency campaign. Alfonsín has expressed opposition to an amnesty law recently passed by the military absolving itself of responsibility for crimes committed under military rule, and he has publicly vowed to bring to justice the officials responsible for such crimes. In addition, he has proposed limiting the role of the military by abolishing the service commander posts, cutting military spending to 2 percent of the gross national product, and ending mandatory military service.

3.3(b)(1) 3.5(c)

Alfonsín is also expected to attempt to democratize the trade unions by allowing them to elect their own leaders. They say that step would be intended to remove the entrenched Peronist labor bureaucracy, which he says does not represent the rank and file. In July 1983 if Alfonsín were elected, the unions would give him no quarter. Because his policies have alienated both that powerful sector and the military, we believe he will have great difficulty implementing his domestic program.

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Career and Personal Data

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Alfonsín has a doctorate in law and social sciences from the University of Buenos Aires. He has held positions in the UCR since the 1950s. He has served two terms in the Buenos Aires provincial Chamber of Deputies, and during the early 1960s he served in the national Chamber of Deputies. He was the UCR candidate for governor of Buenos Aires Province in 1967, before the then ruling military canceled the election.

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Alfonsín acquired his image in Argentina as a populist and an activist, reform-minded democrat in the late 1960s, when he published antigovernment editorials in the UCR monthly and was arrested for participating in an illegal street demonstration. Once a protege of now deceased UCR leader Ricardo Balbín, Alfonsín became dissatisfied with Balbín's conservative, accommodative position on military rule in the early 1970s,

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They say he became convinced that the UCR needed to take on a more populist character and to move to the left to challenge the Peronists and to take advantage of widespread public discontent with the military government. For over a decade he fought tenaciously for the party leadership. In the year preceding the presidential election, he organized massive political rallies; backed human rights marches; and, as an attorney, defended numerous political detainees. He assured his dominance in the party when his faction won absolute control of the UCR National Committee in internal party elections in July 1983.

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During the past year Alfonsín has met with European Socialist leaders in Europe, including French President François Mitterrand and Spanish Prime Minister Felipe González Márquez. He has also visited the United States and the Soviet Union and has traveled throughout Latin America. Alfonsín, 56, is married to the former María Lorenza Barreneche. He has six children and at least 12 grandchildren.

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31 October 1983

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